



Northwest Education Services Board of Education

We deeply appreciate our Board members for their commitment to education and for representing the interests of students and schools throughout our service area of Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau counties.

Rachael Birgy

Rachael has served on our Board of Education since 2013, representing Kalkaska County. She currently serves as Board vice president. Her career includes extensive community volunteerism centering on literacy for students and building early childhood learning opportunities. Kalkaska Public Schools also shares in Rachael's commitment to public service, as she also serves on the district's Board of Education as president.

Nicki Brown

Joining our Board of Education in 2019, Nicki represents Benzie County. An active member of her community, she supports a variety of community programs as a volunteer. Nicki is employed by Munson Medical Center and works for Michigan State University as Assistant Director of Student Programs coordinating third- and fourth-year medical students in northern Michigan.

Joseph Fisher

Since 1977, Joe has served on our Board of Education and is currently president, representing Antrim County. His long-term commitment to education has run nearly parallel to his career practicing law in northern Michigan where he is a member of the Grand Traverse-Leelanau-Antrim Bar Association.

Elizabeth Lajko

Beth began her term on our Board of Education in 2023 representing Grand Traverse County. A founding member of the parent-teacher organization at Kingsley Area Schools, she also served on the Kingsley school board for more than 25 years. In addition to her volunteerism, Beth also serves her community as a drug court treatment probation officer for the 86th District Court.

Elizabeth Petrella

Liz holds the office of treasurer for the Board of Education where she has represented Grand Traverse County since 2009. A team member of Traverse Connect, Liz also shares her talents through community volunteerism which spans youth services, health care and housing.

James Scherrer

An active ISD Board of Education member since 2006, Jim has filled many roles on this board and currently serves as trustee, representing Leelanau County. Former CEO of Child & Family Services of Northwestern Michigan, Jim has dedicated many years to serving children and families in the region.

Lisa Thomas

As a representative of Grand Traverse County, Lisa joined our Board of Education in 2023 and currently serves as secretary. She works as dean of students at Northwestern Michigan College. In addition to her experience as a social worker dealing in child welfare, she has served on the Board of Directors at Child & Family Services of Northwestern Michigan and as co-chair of the Homeless Youth Initiative for the Northwest Michigan Coalition to End Homelessness.